
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 August 2017

by N A Holdsworth MCD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 25/08/17

Appeal Ref: APP/Z2260/D/17/3175604

15 Warre Avenue, Ramsgate, CT11 0HD

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Peter Martin against the decision of Thanet District Council.
 - The application Ref FH/TH/17/0025, dated 6 January 2017, was refused by notice dated 14 March 2017.
 - The development proposed is a rear first and second floor extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. Whilst plan numbers are not listed on the Council's decision notice, it is clear from the officer's report and the appeal questionnaire that the reasons for refusal relate to the development shown on amended plans received by the Council on 13 March 2017. The amended plans omit a conservatory and balconies shown on the plans submitted to the Council at the time the application was made. The description of the development is altered to reflect the content of the amended plans upon which this decision is based.

Main Issue

3. The effect on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal building occupies a prominent position on the west side of Warre Avenue, close to its junction with Royal Esplanade. It is designated as an Area of High Townscape Value in the Thanet Local Plan 2006 (LP); and the attractive, spacious character of the area surrounding the site, defined by detached buildings of various styles with substantial gaps between each other, surrounded by established mature trees and vegetation comprise characteristics that accordingly merit special recognition.
5. The bulk of the existing building is orientated towards the front of the site, facing Warre Avenue. Whilst the building has a substantial existing extension to its rear, its single storey height limits its effect on views around the rear of the building from the surrounding area. This is particularly apparent in the relatively open views to the north across the site from the corner of Warre Avenue and Royal Esplanade.

6. The extension proposed would add a two storey structure to the rear elevation of the building within a similar footprint to the existing single storey extension, with a hipped roof rising almost to the full ridge height of the existing building. As a consequence of its bulk and scale the extension would be a prominent feature in views from the corner of Royal Esplanade and Warre Avenue, obscuring the existing open vista across the rear of the property. It would also be visible through the gap between 24 and 25 Royal Esplanade. In both cases it would reduce the extent of visual space between buildings, diminishing the spacious character of the townscape surrounding the site.
7. The footprint of the building and garden area would not significantly change. However, whilst the existing hedges and trees would afford some screening of the extension it would still be clearly visible from the surrounding area. Furthermore, the appearance of such landscaping features is likely to change over time. The use of materials that are sympathetic to the host building would not address the harm that arises due to the bulk, mass and scale of the extension.
8. I have considered the examples of other development cited by the appellant within the area surrounding the appeal site. Whilst I have limited information to the background of these developments, they have not, even cumulatively, resulted in harm to the character of the surrounding townscape to the same extent as would arise as a consequence of the proposed development.
9. The application received the support of the Town Council. However, the decision must be made in accordance with the development plan, taking account of all representations received. I have also considered the appellant's view that the proposal would enable a programme of building works to take place that would improve the appearance of the property. However, the benefits of any cosmetic enhancement to the building would not outweigh the harm that arises from the additional bulk, scale and mass of the extension and its adverse effect on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Conclusion

10. The proposed extension would result in material harm to the character and appearance of the area. This would conflict with the objectives of saved LP policies D1 and D7 which, amongst other things, require new developments to respect and enhance the local character of the area in which they are located and to compliment the special character of Areas of High Townscape Value. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Neil Holdsworth

INSPECTOR